

**Statement by Scott M. Burns
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White House Office of National Drug Control Policy
Before the House Committee on Government Reform
Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources
May 23, 2006**

Chairman Souder, Ranking Member Cummings, and Distinguished Members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today in support of the President's Fiscal Year 2007 National Drug Control Budget. I thank the Subcommittee for its strong bipartisan commitment to our shared national goal of reducing drug use in America, especially among our youth.

High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) program

For 2007, the Budget proposes transferring the High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) program, currently operated by the Office of National Drug Control Policy, to the Department of Justice (DOJ). The Administration's basis for this transfer is to ensure better coordination with the Organized Crime and Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) and the Department's many drug enforcement efforts. The Administration believes that DOJ's management and oversight of the program will ensure that we are fully utilizing all resources and programs to their fullest potential to achieve the common goal of market disruption for illegal drugs. The Administration will preserve important elements of the program, such as intelligence sharing and fostering multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional law enforcement coordination among Federal, State, and local agencies and officials.

DOJ will make certain that the HIDTA program plays a key role in our Nation's drug enforcement efforts, particularly those involving coordination with State and local departments, in a manner that complements the activities of other existing programs, like OCDETF, and of individual agencies involved in drug enforcement. The 2007 Budget proposes \$207.6 million for HIDTA as a distinct activity within DOJ.

Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grants

As noted in testimony from my colleague from the Department of Justice, the FY 2007 budget proposes elimination of the Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grants. Over \$1.2 billion in discretionary grant assistance is available for state and local law enforcement through the U.S. Department of Justice for many of the same purposes JAG funded, such as training and equipment that logically cross-cut crime and drug issues. The Administration is additionally committed to providing funding to State and local entities for terrorism preparedness programs, primarily through the Department of Homeland Security. The DOJ Fiscal Year 2007 President's Budget request provides over \$1.2 billion in discretionary grant assistance to State, local and tribal governments, including

\$44.6 million to fight terrorism; \$66.6 million to strengthen communities through programs providing services such as drug treatment; \$88.2 million to combat violence, including enhancements to Project Safe Neighborhoods; \$409.2 million to assist crime victims; \$214.8 million for law enforcement technology, including funding to continue and further develop the Administration's DNA initiative; and \$209 million to support drug enforcement, including funding to continue and expand the Southwest Border Drug Prosecution Program. To help States plan or implement prescription drug monitoring programs, the Harold Rogers Prescription Drug Monitoring Program request is \$9.9 million, while \$40 million is requested for the cleanup of methamphetamine labs. In addition, the request for the Cannabis Eradication Program is \$10.713 million, an increase of nearly \$6 million.

Methamphetamine

Since the early 1990s, and especially over the last few years, the use of methamphetamine has become a severe and troubling problem, both at the national level and in affected communities. In October 2004 the Federal government released the *National Synthetic Drugs Action Plan*, a comprehensive national plan for addressing the problems of synthetic and pharmaceutical drug trafficking and abuse. Next week, the Administration will release the 2006 *Synthetic Drug Control Strategy*, which is a strategy for responding to the use, production and trafficking of methamphetamine, and the non-medical use of controlled substance prescription drugs.

Although there has been concern over the increase in domestic laboratories until 2004, there has also been good news. On the one hand, the number of methamphetamine laboratories appears to have peaked in 2004 with more than 17,500 domestic laboratory incidents. But domestic laboratory numbers appear to have taken a sharp downturn in 2005, thanks largely to innovative strategies employed by the States. After peaking with more than 17,500 laboratory incidents reported in 2004, data for first ten months of 2005¹ show a substantial and significant reduction in methamphetamine laboratory incidents (15,203 in the first ten months of 2004, compared to 11,189 in the first ten months of 2005 – a 26.4% reduction). Since 2002, the number of domestic “super labs” reported—those methamphetamine laboratories with a production capacity estimated at 10 or more pounds within a 24-hour period—has posted a dramatic decline, falling from 144 in 2002 to just 38 in 2005, due both to joint DEA and Canadian RCMP law enforcement interventions to stem the smuggling of pseudoephedrine into the United States and to aggressive domestic investigations by Federal, State and local law enforcement. With a new anti-methamphetamine law, the Combat Methamphetamine Epidemic Act (“Combat Meth Act”), recently enacted by the United States Congress and signed by the President on March 9—the strongest Federal anti-methamphetamine legislation enacted in our Nation's history—the Administration seeks to continue such reductions.

¹ Methamphetamine laboratory numbers tend to be complete after six months. As of the date of this testimony, methamphetamine laboratory number data was current through October 2005.

Other positive developments include decreases in the past-month use of any illicit drug among youth² by 19 percent³ and past month use of methamphetamine use by 36 percent⁴ since 2001. This tracks good news regarding other youth drug use. Similarly, the use of steroids dropped dramatically among youth from 2001 to 2005 with the use of steroids down 38 percent, 37 percent, and 30 percent for lifetime, past year, and past month use, respectively. The past-month use among teens of hallucinogens and LSD use is down by nearly two-thirds, as is past-month Ecstasy (3, 4 methylenedioxy-methamphetamine, or MDMA) use. Marijuana use has also dropped in all three categories: 13 percent for lifetime use, 15 percent for past year use, and 19 percent for 30-day use, decreasing 28 percent among 8th graders (from 9.2 percent to 6.6 percent), and 23 percent among 10th graders (from 19.8 percent to 15.2 percent).

Working with our international allies has taken on additional importance because the market share held by domestic methamphetamine laboratory operators looks to be decreasing. This is thanks to innovative strategies employed by the States. We expect this trend to continue, thanks to the leadership of the Congress in passing, and President in signing, the Combat Meth Act.

On the international front, in March 2006 the Administration, after consultation with an array of interested nations, successfully pushed through a resolution on synthetic drug precursors, particularly methamphetamine precursors, at the annual meeting of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND). The U.S.-sponsored CND resolution will greatly advance the rapid exchange of detailed precursor shipment information and will lead to reduced diversion of meth precursors.

Federal efforts have also had a dramatic effect on the fight against methamphetamine. The High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) program has 96 initiatives that are specifically focused on methamphetamine—the largest number of initiatives focused on any single drug. Further, the President’s 2007 Budget includes \$40.1 million for Meth lab clean-up, an increase of \$20.3 million over the 2006 enacted level. In addition, DEA has taken steps to counter the methamphetamine threat. DEA conducted *Operation Wildfire*, a sweep operation conducted with state and local law enforcement partners in more than 200 cities across the United States that resulted in 427 arrests and the seizure of more than 208 pounds of methamphetamine.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

² “Youth” refers to 8th, 10th, and 12th graders, the populations measured by the *Monitoring the Future* study.

³ 2005 *Monitoring the Future*. Special analysis conducted for the Office of National Drug Control Policy by MTF researchers.

⁴ Ibid.